

JERUSALEM Yad Vashem

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE, VOL. 35, FALL 2004

I happened to find a pencil and was writing
on a whim, out of nostalgia, in a dream.

Primo Levi

The Language of Art

**Video Art in the
New Holocaust History Museum** (pp. 4-5)

Generation to Generation: Sharing the Legacy

International and multi-generational gathering of
Holocaust survivors and their families
to be held in May 2005 (p. 11)

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Yad Vashem

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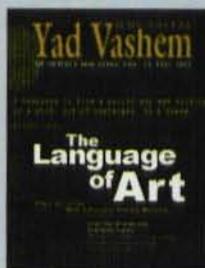
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Editors' Remarks

As Yad Vashem continues to mark its Jubilee year, we focus on the task of keeping Holocaust remembrance relevant to the younger generations. This may be achieved first and foremost through education, as exemplified in our Fourth International Conference for Educators (see "Getting the Message Across," pp. 8-9). With the imminent launch of our Online Names Database, Yad Vashem is also using the newest advances in communications and digital resources in order to disseminate—and collect—information on the Shoah and its victims (see "Feedback Before the Launch," pp. 2-3). Likewise, the new Holocaust History Museum will use the most advanced work by contemporary artists—video art—in order to explain entire historical themes (see "The Language of Art," pp. 4-5).

The commitment of the next generations in taking on the mantle of Shoah remembrance is a vital component in continuing our mission (see "Sharing the Legacy," pp. 10-11). With their help, Yad Vashem will be able to maintain its dedication to commemorating the people, families and communities that were lost, and continue the legacy of the survivors for generations to come.



Cover:
Video art exhibit by
Uri Tzaig in the new
Holocaust History
Museum (see pp. 4-5)

by Zvi Bernhardt and Nadia Kahan

As Yad Vashem reaches the closing stages of development before launching its Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names onto the Internet, staff working on this unique and vital resource were given a unique opportunity to test the site on experts in the field: Jewish genealogists.

In recent years, genealogy has become increasingly significant in strengthening Jewish identity worldwide. It is a source of tremendous interest, and provides an outlet for cooperation and creativity in the worldwide Jewish community. The Internet is an ideal vehicle for networking and support in this field, with an astonishing amount of data on personal histories from past generations being assembled in databases created by genealogists. Today, for example, it is not uncommon to find websites created by Jews around the world containing a wealth of information on towns in Eastern Europe and their thriving Jewish communities before the war.

While the Internet is a very useful tool in obtaining and sharing information, face-to-face communication remains significant. Each year the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies holds a convention, which attracts hundreds of participants. Every 10 years—including this year—the conference is organized by the Israel Genealogical Society (IGS) and held in Jerusalem. Over six hundred people, more than half of them from abroad, participated in six days of workshops, lectures, and research into Jewish family history.

With its invaluable and exclusive resources, it was natural for Yad Vashem to co-sponsor the summer 2004 conference. Even before their arrival at Yad Vashem, conference participants had the opportunity to meet with Yad Vashem's senior advisors Bella Nahum and Rimma Lerman, who staffed a desk at the hotel and provided information to participants, advising them on the most effective way to conduct their research. During the week of the conference, the reading rooms and databases of Yad Vashem's Reference and Information Services were made available to the participants. In addition, the afternoon and evening sessions of one day were held on site, where participants heard about the development of Yad Vashem's research facilities, attended lectures on Holocaust-related subjects and received an exclusive tour of the site of the new Holocaust History Museum, due to open in March 2005.

For most participants, however, the high point of their visit was the opportunity to search the Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names—the largest repository of its kind for commemorating and gathering information about Holocaust victims. The Information Technology Department allowed the genealogists access to the latest version of the program, reserving for them more than 50 terminals. In addition, a beta version of the database's new interface was used during the conference, which automatically translates information from Hebrew to Latin characters, and incorporates many user-friendly features developed in recent years. These new features enabled participants to conduct most of their research independently—one of the main goals of uploading the database onto the Internet.

The Online Names Database: Feedback Before the L@unch



Jewish genealogists visit the new Hall of Names

Consequently, many people who had anticipated spending a few minutes on the computer found themselves staying longer, as

and feel that we are part of the incredible changes that are happening at Yad Vashem.”

During the day at Yad Vashem, the IGS also

they provided and discovered additional remarkable information about family lost in the Shoah.

The magnitude of the changes, and the speed with which they are occurring were not lost on conference participants. One commented: “It’s exciting to be here

called on Jewish genealogists worldwide to submit Pages of Testimony for Holocaust victims. “The campaign to redeem the names and identities of all those whom the Nazis sought to destroy is especially urgent today,” the Society declared. “The IGS urges Jewish genealogists everywhere to join in this campaign to gather and document names of Holocaust victims and to provide a testament to their lives through Pages of Testimony in the Hall of Names.” The Pages of Testimony submitted will be included in the Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names, scheduled to go online in November.

Zvi Bernhardt is Deputy Director of Reference and Information Services and Head of Data Processing in the Hall of Names, and Nadia Kahan is Director of Reference and Information Services

A Global Partnership

by Estee Yaari

Yad Vashem has received a disk containing 68,000 names of victims murdered at Auschwitz, almost two-thirds of them Jewish. The disk—listing names and other personal information taken from Auschwitz death registers between 1942-44—was provided by the Memorial and Museum at Auschwitz-Birkenau. It was presented by Krzysztof Antonczyk, chief of the digital collection at the Auschwitz Museum, to Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate Avner Shalev, during the third gathering of the international “Recording the Names” workshop at Yad Vashem in September.

At the gathering, 20 experts in the field met with Yad Vashem specialists for working meetings on the international effort to record the names of Holocaust victims. Delegates from 12 countries were given the opportunity to learn about the uploading of Yad Vashem’s Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names to its website, and were part of a pilot program in advance of its launch. The meetings enabled participants to receive updates, share information, discuss advancements in technology and search capabilities, and strengthen cooperation between the various Holocaust institutes represented.

During the gathering, another disk containing names and personal information of more than 25,000 Jews deported from Belgium to extermination camps was presented to Yad Vashem by Ward Adriaens, Director of the Jewish Museum of Deportation and Remembrance in Mechelen, Belgium. The names of these Jewish victims have already been published in memorial books, but the revised and updated names databases given to Yad Vashem will greatly enhance public access to these most valuable sources of information on Shoah victims.

Executive Director of the Victim List Project Dr. Wesley Fisher attended the conference as an observer on behalf of Judge Edward E. Korman, who presides over the distribution of funds from the Holocaust Victim Assets Litigation against Swiss Banks. Also participating were representatives of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum,



Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate Avner Shalev receives a list of Holocaust victims’ names from Krzysztof Antonczyk, chief of the digital collection at the Auschwitz Museum

Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation (USA), International Tracing Service (ITS) – Arolsen (Germany), Joods Museum van Deportatie en Verzet Mechelen (Belgium), Beit Terezin (Israel), Państwowe Muzeum w Oswiecimiu (Poland), Terezínska Iniciativa (Czech Republic), Centre de

Documentation Juive Contemporaine (France), Dokumentationsarchiv des Osterreichischen Widerstandes (Austria), Centro di Documentazione Ebraica Contemporanea Milano (Italy), Gedenkbuch Ravensbrueck (Germany), KZ-Gedenkstaette Flossenbuerg (Germany), Holocaust Documentation Center and Memorial Collection Public Foundation Budapest (Hungary), Project for the Computerization of Names from Slovakia (Slovakia), Project for the Computerization of Names from Lithuania (Israel), Jewish Joint Distribution Committee Archive, Jerusalem (Israel), Central Zionist Archives (Israel), and Illegal Immigration Database, Atlit (Israel).

Holocaust survivor Serge Klarsfeld—who many years ago initiated the gathering and documentation of the names of all French Jews deported to concentration camps during World War II—presented the closing remarks.

The Language of Art

Video Art in the
New Holocaust History Museum

by Yifat Bachrach-Ron

Although paintings, drawings and video art may be found in many galleries and art museums worldwide, they are generally not seen in any other type of museum. However, they will all be part of the new Holocaust History Museum at Yad Vashem, where art from the Holocaust period and works by contemporary artists will form an integral part of the museum's historical exhibits.

"The concept of incorporating works of art into the new museum's displays reflects Yad Vashem's multidisciplinary approach in perpetuating the memory of, and teaching about, the Holocaust," explains Avner Shalev, the Museum's chief curator and Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate. "Art can serve as an important medium, reflecting the multidimensional, inner world of the victims,

document and illustrate the subject matter, but also to increase their emotional involvement."

When planning certain sections of the museum, museum designer Dorit Harel of Dorit Harel Design Inc. proposed using audio-visual presentations instead of conventional exhibits. Boris Mafzir, media consultant for Yad Vashem, took this idea one step further by suggesting that certain entire historical themes be portrayed via a contemporary art form: video art. After a long process, two Israeli artists were chosen: Michal Rovner and Uri Tzaig.

Both Rovner and Tzaig have already earned international acclaim, and are considered world-class artists. The works of Michal Rovner have been displayed in many venues, including a one-person show at New York's Whitney Museum. Rovner was also chosen to represent Israel at

a journey into the everyday world of ordinary people within their communities; a world now vanished. The shortage of high quality footage documenting Jewish life before the Holocaust made the video's creation difficult. "The challenge was to recreate the atmosphere of Jewish life," explains Rovner. "I took different film clips and blended them into one background, just as the Jews blended into the fabric of life in the countries where they lived."

The second work, created by Tzaig, will be the final section of the museum. In one corner of the gallery, a "virtual" album with turning pages will display original manuscripts—diaries, letters, notes and memoirs—written by Jews during the Holocaust period and by survivors afterwards. Another wall will show floating letters

Courtesy Michal Rovner



Courtesy Uri Tzaig



A "virtual album" created by Uri Tzaig, displaying original manuscripts by Jews during and immediately following the Holocaust

The village of Kolbuszowa, Poland, early 1930s. The video art work, composed by Michal Rovner, was built from seven different video clips blended together to depict a single scene

that occasionally combine to form words and sentences. The letters seem to dart through a moving spotlight—echoing the spotlights used in the camps—highlighting the written texts (see cover). "The two works symbolize the human spirit that survived even in the inferno," explains Tzaig. "After looking at the most distressing materials—pictures that depict hell itself—I decided to use the faceless, written word, which represents structured thought and human faith. The letters are like the strings of a musical instrument, and this room will serve as a sound box for these strings, preserving the human beauty that managed to survive."

In accordance with the request of the museum committee, both artists used only authentic historical materials, gleaned from archives at Yad Vashem and around the world. "Throughout the creation process," says Rovner, "I was aware of the great privilege given to me—both as an artist and as a human being—in being allowed to work with these materials. It has deepened my awareness of the humanity and power of the world we lost."

while helping to depict historical events. We believe that the multidisciplinary displays will broaden the visitors' knowledge, and enhance their interest in, and experience of, the subject matter of the museum."

Yehudit Inbar, Yad Vashem's museum curator and Director of the Museums Division adds: "The difference between a museum and a history book is that all museums place their primary emphasis on giving the visitor an experience. Art generates an emotional response in the viewer, and this is why, in an historical museum, works of art serve not only to

the Biennale in Venice. Likewise, Uri Tzaig's works have been displayed worldwide, including the recent Biennale in Istanbul, the Yokohama Biennale in Japan, the Georges Pompidou Center in Paris, and the Kwangju Biennale in South Korea.

At the Museum's entrance, Rovner has created a 10-minute video art display portraying the Jewish world in Europe before the Holocaust, donated by the Clore Israel Foundation. This work—which will be projected on the 13 meter-high triangular eastern wall of the museum as suggested by Dorit Harel—takes the visitor on

by Leah Goldstein

In an emotional ceremony at Yad Vashem on 30 June, a *huppa* (bridal canopy)—last used almost six decades ago—was loaned by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (Joint) for display in the new Holocaust History Museum.

The *huppa*, originally from *Eretz Yisrael* (British Mandatory Palestine), was purchased by Joint board member Jane Weitzman at a public auction in America several years ago. It dates back to the end of WWII, when the Joint asked the *Yishuv* (the Jewish community in *Eretz Yisrael*) to help provide rings and *huppot* required for Jewish weddings in the Displaced Persons' (DP) camps. For thousands of Holocaust survivors—eager to marry as quickly as possible and raise new families—these were often the only wedding paraphernalia they used.

Avraham and Shoshana Roshkovsky were one of seven couples to use such a *huppa* on 19 May 1945, in the Bergen-Belsen DP camp. The couple met when Avraham—who had survived the war in hiding with a Christian family—was brought with a broken leg to a British-run hospital where Shoshana was volunteering. Bergen-Belsen was the third camp Shoshana had survived. None of her family survived to see her marry.

Shoshana's "wedding gown" was a black skirt and oversized shirt; her "veil" a large gauze bandage. Two dwarfs who had survived the Mengele experiments formed the band. "We got up and danced to forget our sadness. We danced until dawn," Shoshana recalled. Their son Moshe was born in September 1946 in Bergen-Belsen, and two years later, they made *aliya*. All three were present at the ceremony at Yad Vashem, which marked the "closing of a circle" for the Roshkovskys, as well as for the *huppa*, which had been lost after the DP camps were disbanded.

One aspect emphasized by the new Museum will be the rebuilding of Jewish life after the Holocaust; the Joint's activities on behalf of DP camp survivors were central to those events [see box]. For Shoshana and Avraham, it marked the beginning of a new life of hope. "Despite our smiles today, this takes us back to that awful time and place," said Shoshana. "We lost a family, but we started a new family and we continued with our lives."

Symbol of Hope



Avraham and Shoshana Roshkovsky in front of a *huppa* similar to the one they were married under, sent to Europe by the Joint after the war

Renewal of Jewish Life in the DP Camps

At the end of 1945, some 55,000 Jewish survivors of forced-labor camps, concentration camps, extermination camps and death marches were either unwilling or unable to return to their homes. Most of the camp survivors assembled in DP camps in the Allied zones of occupation in Germany and Austria, and were joined by refugees fleeing from Eastern Europe. By the end of 1946, there were an estimated 250,000 Jewish DPs—mostly single young persons but also a large number of family groups and children. As early as June 1945, they had organized themselves as a group called *She'erit Hapletah* (Surviving Remnant) with its own collective consciousness and objective: to emigrate from Europe and settle in *Eretz Yisrael*, though ultimately many emigrated to the US and other countries.

Although the DP camps were under the auspices of the Allied military authorities, their care was entrusted to the United Nations, which supplied basic necessities and acted as the principal coordinating and supervisory agency of the nongovernmental welfare agencies. The Joint, headed by its European director, Joseph

J. Schwartz, sent its first team to the American-run DP camps in June 1945. By August 1945, its operations gained official recognition and it expanded activities, offering assistance to Jews in the camps and aiding those who wished to emigrate to Palestine.

In the British zone, a Jewish Relief Unit sponsored by British Jewry was engaged in welfare operations. Emissaries of the Jewish Brigade Group, Jewish youth movements and agricultural settlement organizations from Palestine, and a delegation of the Jewish Agency headed by Haim Yahlil were also active in the DP camps.

Despite the extraordinary challenges associated with the rehabilitation of the survivors, dedicated and resourceful volunteers answered their physical, emotional and spiritual needs to the best of their abilities, though the efforts of the DPs themselves were decisive. In addition to the wedding supplies, the Joint sent *tefillin*, *mezuzot*, *Torah* scrolls, holy books and Hebrew dictionaries to the refugees in order to help rekindle the Jewish life that had been all but extinguished during the war.

When remembering heroism during the Holocaust, most people recall the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, Jewish partisans or other astonishing acts of courage. However, heroism took many forms during those years—physical, mental, spiritual and religious. In Pinczów, near Kielce (Poland), one family displayed incredible bravery despite the potentially terrible consequences of their actions, while another was kept alive thanks to that bravery as well as their own deep religious faith.

On *Sukkot* 1942, Pinczów's remaining Jews were rounded up and sent to their deaths. One of the Jewish residents, Shlomo Szejner, and his eldest son, Alter Yechiel, found temporary sanctuary with a Pole. However, they were soon compelled to rejoin his wife, Alte Chaja, and their three other children—Israel, Yitzhak Menachem and Tova Gittel—fleeing to the nearby woods under a hail of German bullets. For three months, the family moved from place to place in a continuing quest for food and safety.

As the temperature in the forest dropped to below freezing, Shlomo realized that he had no choice but to ask a local acquaintance, Franciszek Matjas, for help. Before the war, Shlomo had lent Franciszek money to finish constructing his home, assuring him he could pay off the loan whenever he was able. Franciszek promised one day to return the favor. On Christmas night 1942, Shlomo arrived at the Matjas's home in Debowka. Shocked at Shlomo's disheveled appearance, Franciszek soon remembered Shlomo's earlier kindness and, despite his fear of Nazi retribution if he was ever discovered, agreed to help. The seven people—the six Szejners and Shlomo's nephew Tzemach—spent the next two years in a dark enclosure adjoining the kitchen, with only one small air vent. The Matjases brought them food through an opening in the roof leading to a barn, all the time respecting their guests' kosher dietary requirements.

Only Franciszek Matjas, his wife Józefa and three of their five children knew about the hidden Jews. To keep themselves occupied and their spirits lifted, Shlomo and his sons produced their own copies of religious prayer books, including the Book of Psalms, a *Siddur* and a *Haggadah*. For ink, they removed the lead from pencils and melted it; the Matjas's children gave them notebooks to write on. Shlomo and his son Israel also composed a Jewish calendar, on which is recorded not only the Jewish festivals but also the tragic events of 1943 as witnessed by Franciszek, including the following:

Keeping the Faith

The seven people spent the next two years in a dark enclosure adjoining the kitchen



Pages from the Jewish calendar (left) and Book of Psalms (right) written by the Szejner family while in hiding

"14.4.43 – 18 Jews shot in Góra, including our neighbor Gross and Mordechai Gold with son Yitzhak; 27.5.43 – the Andros 'Reczka' underground unit killed four Jews near Wislica; 6.11.43 – 17 Jews shot in the Boguszycze forest."

Tragically, Tzemach died from gangrene while in hiding, and was temporarily buried by Franciszek in his courtyard. Upon liberation in January 1945, the Szejners returned to Pinczów, but found the town's Jewish population almost completely wiped out. After escaping an attack by marauding Poles, they moved to Lodz, then France, and ultimately to Israel. They took with them their beautifully hand-written works and a pair of *tefillin*, given to Israel Szejner for his *bar-mitzvah*, and used by all the men while in hiding.

In 1988, Franciszek and Józefa Matjas were recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations. At the ceremony, Alter Yechiel Szejner said that when he passes on from this world he is not sure where he will go, but if he is sent to heaven, he knows whom he will find there: Franciszek Matjas. This summer, Israel Szejner agreed to loan Yad Vashem some of the religious artifacts his family produced while in hiding. Here they will give witness to an extraordinary story of courage and heroism—and faith in better days to come.

The author is Director of the Righteous Among the Nations Department

To keep themselves occupied and their spirits lifted, Shlomo and his sons produced their own copies of religious prayer books

by Zvi Newman and Estee Yaari

“How do I teach about the Holocaust to hostile audiences?” “I have only four hours to teach about the *Shoah*—on what should I focus?” “Where can I make contact with survivors so that my students can hear their testimonies first hand?”

Questions like these were raised, discussed and resolved at the Fourth International Conference for Educators, “Teaching the Holocaust to Future Generations” at Yad Vashem

Getting the

this August. The four-day conference, sponsored by the Asper International Holocaust Studies Program, opened in the presence of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Industry, Trade and Labor Ehud Olmert, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate Avner Shalev and President of Oranim Educational Initiatives—co-organizers of the conference—Shlomo (Momo) Lifshitz.

The conference focused on interdisciplinary approaches to teaching the Holocaust, Holocaust education in different parts of the world, and current antisemitism. Over 220 educators from 31 countries—including China, Croatia, Germany, Poland, Romania, Russia, South Africa, Sweden, Turkey and the United States—heard lectures in plenary sessions, joined discussion groups and participated in workshops that explored new and varied approaches to Holocaust education in the 21st century. The groups and workshops were

led by experts on the Holocaust and education from leading institutions around the world, including the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine (Paris), the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Imperial War Museum (London), the Living History Forum (Stockholm) and the Holocaust Foundation (Moscow).

The conference focused on the future, with participants exposed to new areas of research and a wide range of pedagogical material, curricula,

movies, educational websites and more. At the heart of the conference were discussion groups on teacher-training, pedagogical approaches, and antisemitism and Holocaust denial. These groups demonstrated the value of assembling professionals from around the world—each with a unique perspective and professional context—to discuss difficult and practical issues.

One major focus was how to approach unwilling and sometimes hostile audiences, as well as how to make the subject more approachable

Message



Participants in a discussion group at the Fourth International Conference for Educators at Yad Vashem

“A Unique Learning Experience” Summer Seminars 2004

by Kathryn Berman and David Metzler

This summer, the International School for Holocaust Studies hosted two international seminars, each attended by over 30 participants from countries worldwide. The first, held in July, welcomed Jewish and non-Jewish individuals from 13 different countries, who heard lectures on Holocaust education, met with Holocaust survivors, and toured the country. “I was so thrilled to have been part of the Yad Vashem group this summer,” commented Canadian participant Thomas Penney. “It was a unique learning experience—so much information to share with so many people from all parts of the world. The learning was on so many levels:

historical, ethical, and dare I say spiritual.”

For the third consecutive year, the School also organized a summer seminar for Jewish educators working in Jewish educational frameworks. Educators from the USA, Canada, South Africa, UK, Croatia and Colombia participated in an intensive program on *Shoah* education.

Leading scholars and educational experts posed questions such as “How do we implement Holocaust education in our schools and instill a positive Jewish identity in our students?” “What is our responsibility and how will we transmit Holocaust remembrance without survivors?” and “How shall we commemorate Holocaust Remembrance Day in the future?” Workshops

were held on educational issues, pedagogical theories and practical applications in Jewish educational frameworks. For the first time, tutoring sessions in smaller groups allowed participants to select a particular topic for further investigation, with the assistance of a Yad Vashem expert.

The next winter seminar will be held from 3-19 January 2005, and the next Jewish Educators’ seminar from 26 December 2004 – 7 January 2005. (For more information please visit: www.yadvashem.org/education)

Kathryn Berman is Department Coordinator, Seminars for Educators from Abroad, and David Metzler is Head of the Diaspora Desk, International School for Holocaust Studies

for those who have had very little exposure to it. A Hebrew Union College educator emphasized the effectiveness of using survivor testimonies from within the students' local community, and when the director of youth programs at an informal Jewish educational institution sought assistance in effectively teaching the Holocaust on a limited time budget, a fellow Californian offered to help based on her own experience.

Dr. Werner Dreier of the Austrian Ministry of Education and Culture noted the difficulty many of his countrymen confront in facing the actions of their own ancestors. Solutions suggested included using victims' personal stories, employing art and other unconventional tools, or discussing the accomplishments of local Jews who were murdered—particularly those who played a role in shaping Austrian and German life. This approach is slowly being implemented in Austrian textbooks.

Dealing with today's antisemitism and Holocaust denial in the context of Holocaust education was another topic. A representative of the Simon Wiesenthal Center reported on the "hijacking" of a major international teachers' forum by antisemitic elements rooted in extremist anti-globalization and anti-Zionist organizations, as well as their calls to introduce revisionist history into educational frameworks worldwide. Sophisticated forms

of antisemitism on the Internet were reported by the manager of a Holocaust education website.

A c r o s s :

International Conference on Teaching the Holocaust to Future Generations

An American participant reinforced the importance of grassroots education efforts in Europe, noting several run by graduates of Yad Vashem's teacher training programs.

Scores of workshops were held on a myriad of topics, including teaching the Holocaust to Israeli Arabs, using film to teach the Holocaust, and use of the Internet in Holocaust education. Questions such as the right age to begin Holocaust education, the role of survivor testimonies in the classroom, and women in concentration camps were also considered. A deaf and mute Jewish doctoral student at the University of Hamburg led a workshop on deaf Jews in the Holocaust.

"Teaching the Holocaust is not only presenting historical facts. It is also conveying the Holocaust

as a human, societal and Jewish event," said the School's Director Dr. Motti Shalem. "The main focus of the International School's educational approach is identification with the individual, and from that point to move on to the broader story. We believe that an interdisciplinary approach to Holocaust education will lead to a deeper and more extensive knowledge of the *Shoah*."

Circles – A Dialogue with the Past New Educational Kit on Jewish Heritage

by Shlomit Steiner

“... Every month brought with it profound changes that fundamentally altered the lives of the Jews” (Emanuel Ringelblum).

Circles – A Dialogue with the Past is an educational kit on Jewish heritage and its expressions during the Holocaust. Published in Hebrew in 2002, and widely used by secondary schools throughout Israel, the program is now available in English and Russian, made possible through the generous support and assistance of David and Hillary Grunberg and Family; the Samuel Sebba Charitable Trust, UK; and the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany.

Jewish students today share a common tradition with children during the Holocaust; the times may have changed, but “the language of Jewish culture” unites them. The marking of holy days—*Shabbat*, *Chanukah*, *Pesach*, *Purim*—as well as lifecycle events connect the past with the present and the future. *Circles* covers the spiritual, religious and traditional life of the Jewish family and the Jewish people during the *Shoah*. The authentic testimonies, memoirs and historical sources in the kit highlight how Jewish tradition and identity were maintained even under conditions of extreme suffering and hardship.



The author is from the Programs and Curricula Development Department, International School for Holocaust Studies

Recent Highlights at the International School for Holocaust Studies

In July, 17 employees from institutions that commemorate the Holocaust in Israel, most of them guides from the International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem, attended a seminar at the Auschwitz Museum in Poland.

In the same month, a seminar for Jewish educators from the FSU and a seminar for educators from Austria were held at Yad Vashem. Additional events included a training course for teachers who accompany pupils during the “March of the Living” in Poland and a training course for future guides. There were also study days on using survivor testimonies to teach about the Holocaust, attended by Israeli teachers working in the FSU and other teachers from all over Israel.

In the days preceding *Tisha B'Av*, the School conducted Holocaust-related educational activities for religious institutions. In August, elementary school teachers attended orientation days in preparation for the new school year, and in September, there was a study day for German volunteers from the Ot Hakapara organization.

Over the summer some 3,500 youths from the birthright israel program visited Yad Vashem and participated in programs specially designed for them. Study days for senior IDF officers were also held in July. In addition, seven IDF delegations participated in a two-day preparatory course prior to their trip to Poland and other Eastern European destinations, as part of the Witnesses in Uniform project.

During September, *From Crisis to Hope*—the program to teach 11th grade students from the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Employment's educational facilities about the *Shoah* and its relevance today—entered its second year. Over 4,000 of these students participated in study days held at Yad Vashem, and conducted activities with the Mobile Unit in their schools. In addition some 500 children and their parents at the *Yahalom summer camp* visited the School, and 140 students from youth villages and residential facilities participated in two meetings prior to their trip to Poland in October, as part of the *Green Leaf* project.

New: Online Newsletter for Educators

In August, the International School for Holocaust Studies launched its new online newsletter for educators. Geared to individuals involved in formal and informal Holocaust education, *Teaching the Legacy – Yad Vashem's e-Newsletter for Holocaust Educators* (www.yadvashem.org/education/newsletter/english/first/index.htm), aims to provide regular access to the vast array of Holocaust educational resources being developed by the 90 staff members at the School. In addition, the newsletter will feature the latest pedagogical publications and multimedia materials, information regarding online courses and teaching units, and articles about issues in Holocaust education. *Teaching the Legacy* will also feature regular updates about the many conferences, courses, and other educational opportunities the School offers at Yad Vashem and around the world.

by Leah Goldstein

As future generations prepare to take on the responsibility for remembering the events of the Holocaust and those who suffered and were lost, four active members of the Second Generation explain their connection to the *Shoah*, Yad Vashem, and their vision of Holocaust remembrance in the future:

experienced only deepened their resolve to rebuild and reclaim their lives. To my parents, *Shoah* remembrance meant building family, and building our Jewish communities both here and in Israel. In this way, the torch has already been handed to my generation.”

in vital institutions like Yad Vashem. We—the generations after the Holocaust—will not be able to remember the Holocaust. All we can do is strengthen the institutions that can. Yad Vashem is the worldwide leader in that effort.”

“As time passed and remembrance organizations arose,” continues Ira, “only Yad Vashem undertook the enormous task of preserving all the memories, all the documents, all of the Holocaust. Yad Vashem took as its mission to become the primary resource center for Holocaust remembrance, for document preservation, for being an unbiased data storage repository. Of course, being a child of survivors, I naturally became involved with the activities of Yad Vashem, just like my parents before me.”

Sharing the

Legacy

The Second Generation Accepts the Mantle of Shoah

Connections with the Past

“I don’t remember a time when I wasn’t aware of the Holocaust,” says Yad Vashem Benefactor and American Society Vice-Chairman Ira Drukier. “My parents, Charles and Toby Drukier, were survivors, as were all their friends. I was surrounded by their memories of those years, yet many survivors kept the histories to themselves for many complex reasons.

“As I grew older and began to understand the strength of the survivors—both in living through the most tragic of times and in going forward to make new lives—I realized how important it was for us, their children, to keep their memories alive, intact and unadorned.”

For American Society Secretary-General Zygmunt Wilf, *Shoah* remembrance was always a central theme for him and his family: “As a child of survivors, I was aware, from an early age, that my parents’ experiences during and after the Holocaust shaped and defined their world. Moreover, the suffering and loss they

David Halpern is the American Society’s East Coast National Secretary. His strong connection to Holocaust remembrance also came from his parents, “who suffered in the ghettos and concentration camps of Poland, and who saw their families murdered and synagogues burned. As a son of survivors, I understand the lessons of the *Shoah* perhaps better than most. If I do not work to see the memory preserved, who will?”

The Role of Yad Vashem

“The only individuals who can truly remember the Holocaust are the survivors, and sadly that generation is slowly disappearing,” explains David. “Recognizing their mortality, they made sure their memories were recorded

Practical Involvement

Like other members of his generation, Ira is constantly thinking of ways to maintain public interest in the Holocaust. “Involvement in *Shoah* remembrance takes many forms: helping develop programs to attract new people to this most worthy of causes; supporting Yad Vashem’s work by visiting and attending their programs; and of course, helping raise funds for the work they do.”

Adds David: “Only with the proper investment of time and money can Yad Vashem and other institutions continue their vital work.”

Shoah Remembrance in the 21st Century

In terms of the coming decades, Zygmunt is adamant that people carry on learning about, and from, the *Shoah*. “For my part, I will continue to support Yad Vashem as it seeks to

educate future generations against intolerance and inhumanity. Along with my wife and my children, my focus will continue to be on building remembrance and, as we do, building a better world for the generations to come.”

Ira concurs: “I do not know what the future will bring for Holocaust remembrance, but I do know that supporting Yad Vashem will assure that honesty, accuracy and unbiased views of the Holocaust will remain, even after the victims, survivors, and their children are long gone.”



Ira Drukier signs the Declaration of Remembrance, watched by Rachel Barkai, Director of Yad Vashem's Commemoration and Public Relations Division

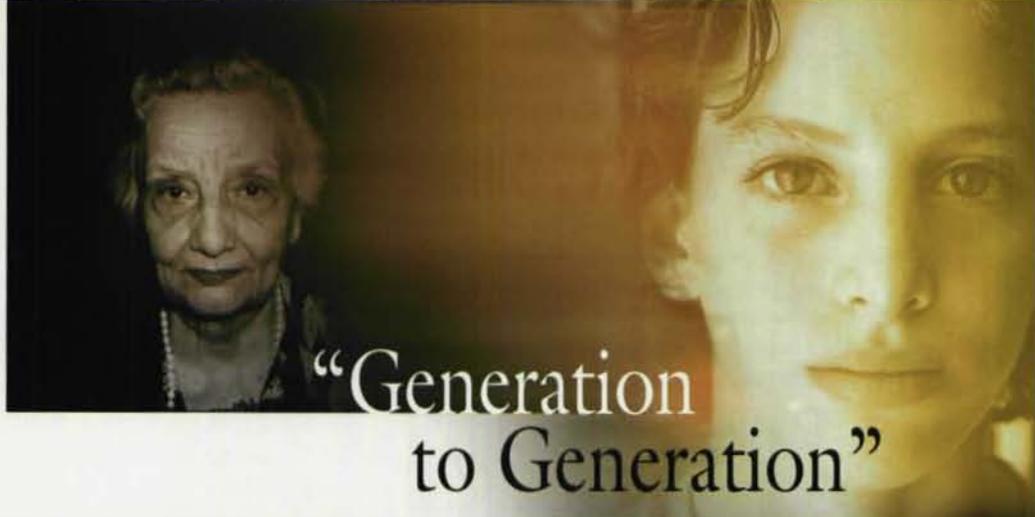
h Remembrance



David Halpern (center) shows a model of the new Holocaust History Museum to his wife, Sharon, and father, Arie Halpern (left)



Zygmunt Wilf (left) presents a token of appreciation to Danek Gertner at the inauguration of the Archives and Library Building



“Generation to Generation”

Survivors and their families to gather at Yad Vashem, May 2005

Registration is underway for an historic international and multi-generational gathering of Holocaust survivors and their families at Yad Vashem next May. The gathering, entitled “Generation to Generation—Sharing the Legacy,” is being organized in cooperation with the Center of Organizations of Holocaust Survivors in Israel, under the patronage of H.E. President Moshe Katsav and Mrs. Gila Katsav. From 4-9 May 2005, thousands of participants of all ages from around the world will come together to pay tribute to the survivors and share in a series of programs and events designed to make this gathering a truly memorable event.

Attendees will have the opportunity to participate in official Holocaust Remembrance Day ceremonies at Yad Vashem, tour the new state-of-the-art Holocaust History Museum (officially opening March 2005), and attend intergenerational discussion groups on topics including: “The World that Was,” “Passing the Torch,” “Keeping Memories Alive” and “Children with Assumed Identities: Returning to Judaism.” Closing this remarkable week will be a special evening in tribute to Holocaust survivors at the IDF Armored Corps Memorial Complex at Latrun on 9 May 2005. The event—the official Israeli commemoration of VE-Day—will mark the 60th anniversary of the end of the war.

The gathering is taking place in cooperation with Holocaust museums and institutes around the world as well as the international Yad Vashem Friends societies. Registration for the conference is through Unitours; for more information, please e-mail: gathering@yadvashem.org.il

Canadian Legacy Fund Ensures Holocaust Education and Leadership

Vice-Chair of the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem Louis Greenbaum is active in a number of Jewish communal organizations in Toronto. Like his younger brother and wife, he is a child of Holocaust survivors, “robbed of their innocence, youth and a normal life, experiencing the worst atrocities imaginable during the *Shoah*, and losing—with the exception of one sibling—our entire families.” Growing up with parents who shared their Holocaust experiences with their children, he made a pledge to himself that their stories would not be forgotten.



Louis Greenbaum

With this objective in mind, Louis sought to establish a Second Generation organization, within the framework of his work for Yad Vashem, thus creating a new base of young leadership for the 21st century. This June, he also launched the Yad Vashem Holocaust Education Legacy Fund “in honor of ‘our’ parent survivors.”

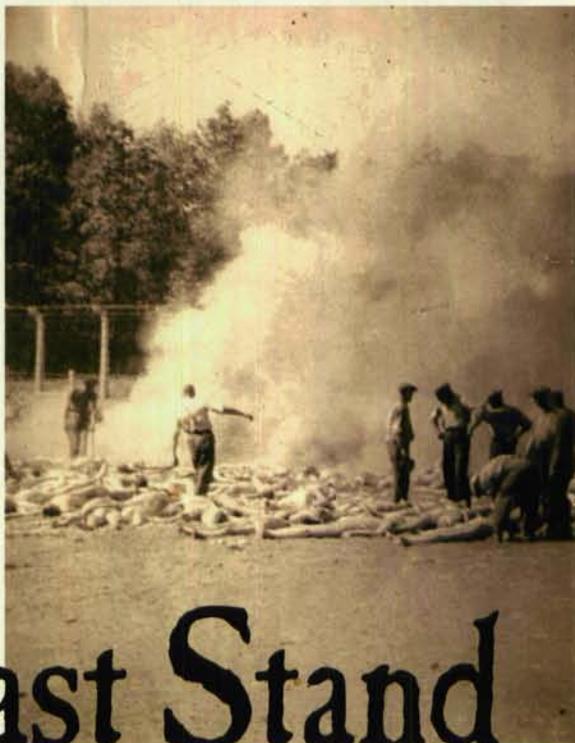
The Legacy Fund will serve as an “annuity,” providing the means to send dozens of teachers annually from across Canada to Yad Vashem’s International School of Holocaust Studies for intensive seminars and teaching programs, so that the history of the Holocaust and its lessons will continue to be taught in Canada’s public and Jewish school classrooms. The Holocaust Education Legacy Fund will be dedicated in Jerusalem during the Canadian Society’s Mission to Israel in 2005, which will coincide with the opening of Yad Vashem’s new Holocaust History Museum.

Louis also anticipates—through example and proper planning—the establishment of an active and dedicated “Third Generation” of Yad Vashem volunteers and leadership. “We are the legacy of our parents,” Louis says, “and we, the Second Generation, in turn have an obligation—a responsibility—to create a legacy for them. It is my hope that this Fund will encourage the Second Generation to take on the mantle of responsibility with regard to remembrance and education, thereby ensuring that the legacy of the survivors continues.”

by Leah Goldstein

In the fall of 1944, with the Soviet army approaching the gates of German-occupied Europe, just one Nazi killing center remained in operation—Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Auschwitz-Birkenau was the largest camp complex built by the Germans, and comprised a concentration camp, a forced-labor camp and an extermination camp. From 1942 until the end of the summer of 1944, hundreds of thousands of Jews were transported there from across Europe. Upon arrival they underwent a *selektion*, most being deemed “unfit” for forced labor and sent immediately to the gas chambers. The victims were told that they would be showering to get clean, and ordered to undress. Then they were herded by the hundreds into the sealed chamber, and gassed to death.



Just before the four women were hanged in front of the camp population, Roza urged: “*Hazak Ve’ematz*”

Cremation of bodies by the Sonderkommando, Auschwitz, Poland, c.1944. The photograph was taken in secret by the Sonderkommando and smuggled out of the death camp by members of the Polish underground

Their Last Stand

60 Years Since the Auschwitz Uprising

One of the most gruesome jobs forced upon those not sent for immediate execution was that of the *Sonderkommando*. These were the prisoners who cut the women’s hair (before or after gassing), brought out the corpses from the gas chambers, removed gold teeth and fillings, and transferred the bodies for cremation. Some *Sonderkommando* cleaned the gas chambers, while others sorted the victims’ personal possessions, preparing them for shipment to Germany. After a few months of such horrific work, they were themselves executed and replaced by new prisoners.

In his introduction to Gideon Greif’s remarkable account of the *Sonderkommando* (*We Wept Without Tears*, Yad Vashem and Yediot Aharonot, 1999), Auschwitz survivor and current Academic Advisor to Yad Vashem Professor Israel Gutman quotes former concentration camp prisoner Christina Zywułska. In a chance meeting, one of the *Sonderkommando* asked Christina why she looked at him so disparagingly—was it his beard or his haircut? “Your work,” she answered.

“He moved towards the window and began to explain with shocking emotion... as if each word he uttered would influence his fate: ‘You think that I volunteered to get this work, but you must know that we were chosen and forced to do it. Even though we were starving, we tried to hide... but they found us, and we had no choice... And the work—if you do not go insane on the first day, you just carry on...

Believe me, I do not wish to enjoy life; I have no-one left, all my family were gassed. I live only to seek revenge and to relate these things...’ He pointed his finger upwards: ‘To you the *Sonderkommando* are terrible people—I promise you that we are like every other human being; just far, far more miserable.’”

During the trial of Adolf Eichmann in 1961, Gutman testified to “an extensive international underground in existence” at Auschwitz, whose members “engaged in mutual help, in giving a slice of bread to the needy, in rescuing a man who was already amongst the condemned... in providing medicines... in securing lighter work for a person who was on the brink of death.” Gutman belonged to the movement’s Jewish division, and related that in 1944 the underground had prepared a plan to blow up the camp and escape.

One of Gutman’s associates, Roza Robota, was given the dangerous task of obtaining gunpowder from Jewish girls who worked in a munitions factory in the Auschwitz complex. Under the constant watch of SS guards, the girls smuggled out small quantities of gunpowder in their clothes, which was then passed along to the *Sonderkommando*. On a specific date, they were to use their homemade explosives to destroy the gas chambers and crematoria, and launch the uprising. However, hearing that their unit was due to be annihilated, members of the

Sonderkommando at Crematorium IV decided they could wait no longer. On 7 October, they set fire to the building and attacked the guards with the tools at their disposal. Seeing the flames, their fellow inmates at Crematorium II went into action, killing a few of their guards. Hundreds of prisoners escaped, but all were soon captured and, along with an additional group which participated in the revolt, executed. Roza and three of the girls from the munitions factory—Regina Safirsztain, Ella Gartner and Estucia (Esther) Wajcblum—were brutally tortured, but refused to name any of their co-conspirators. Just before the four women were hanged in front of the camp population, Roza urged: “*Hazak Ve’ematz*”—Be strong and have courage.

Just weeks after the uprising, with the Allied armies closing in, Himmler ordered the remaining crematoria to be dismantled. By the time the Russians reached Auschwitz on 27 January 1945, the SS had abandoned the complex, having tried to destroy the evidence of their horrific crimes. From the ruins of the crematoria, however, some of the *Sonderkommando*’s diaries were retrieved; in them, they described the daily anguish of being in constant contact with murder. The heroism of their actions in their remaining days testifies not only to their agonizing existence, but also to their will to demonstrate to the world that even under the direst of circumstances, their spirits would not be defeated.

by Leah Goldstein

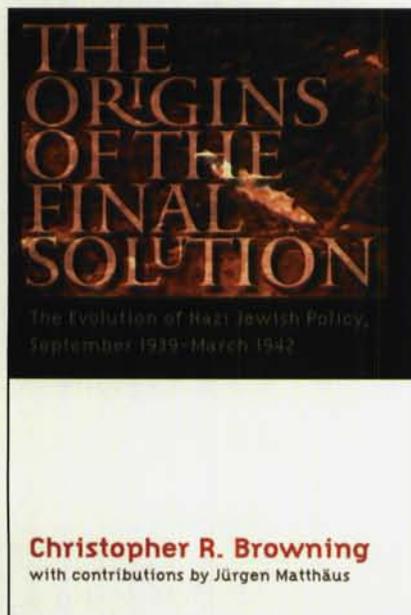
In a brief two years between the autumn of 1939 and the autumn of 1941, Nazi Jewish policy escalated rapidly from the pre-war policy of forced emigration to the Final Solution as it is now understood—the systematic attempt to murder every last Jew within the German grasp. The mass murder of Soviet Jewry had already begun in the late summer of 1941, and only six months later the Nazi regime was ready to begin implementing this policy throughout the rest of its European sphere of influence.

The study of these 30 months—from September 1939 through March 1942—is crucial for understanding the genesis of the Final Solution and constitutes the core of *The*

Christopher R. Browning, The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939 – March 1942

with contributions by Jürgen Matthäus

Yad Vashem in association with University of Nebraska Press, 2004, 616 pages



Origins of the Final Solution. This latest publication in the wider series *The Comprehensive History of the Holocaust* is one of three volumes which will examine the development of Nazi Jewish policy (the other two will focus on the pre-war years and the implementation of the Final Solution respectively), and this year's prizewinner of

The National Jewish Book Awards in the Holocaust Category.

Nazi Jewish policy evolved through a series of “final solutions,” which first envisaged a *judenfrei* (Jew-free) Germany through emigration and then a *judenfrei* Europe through expulsion.

Hitler’s obsession with the Jewish question ensured that the Nazi commitment would not slacken. No leading Nazi could prosper who did not appear to take the Jewish question as seriously as Hitler did. The commitment to some kind of final solution permeated the entire regime—unquestioning loyalists, eugenicists and planning experts, technicians and political careerists—and such

weeks between 18 September and 25 October 1941, events moved rapidly. Hitler reversed his earlier decision not to permit the deportation of Jews from the Third Reich until



Professor Christopher Browning

after the war. The sites of the first extermination camps were selected. The testing of various methods of killing by poison gas was conducted. Jewish emigration from the Third Reich was forbidden. The first 11

The Path to Destruction

a priority on the part of the regime was actively supported or passively accepted by many in the German population at large.

Under Nazi influence, the Jews in Poland quickly became a symbol for the “untenable circumstances” of disease, overcrowding, black marketeering, filth and starvation, and a solution was envisaged through mass expulsion. By 1941 the Jews in Soviet territory were a code word for Bolshevism, Asiatic threat, and partisan resistance in what was perceived as an all-or-nothing war between implacable racial and ideological enemies. Within the context of the war against the Soviet Union, the leap from disappearance of the Jews “sometime, somehow” to immediate mass murder was taken in the summer of 1941.

Nazi racial policy was radicalized at points in time that coincided with the peaks of German military success, as the euphoria of victory emboldened and tempted an elated Hitler to dare ever more drastic policies. With the “war of destruction” in the Soviet Union underway and the imminent prospect of all Europe at his disposal, the last inhibitions fell away. Hitler’s final hesitations in August 1941—to wait until “after the war”—were overcome in late September and early October, with the last great military encirclements that still promised an early victory. In the five

Jewish transports departed for Lodz as a temporary holding station. The vision of the Final Solution had crystallized in the minds of the Nazi leadership and was henceforth being turned into reality. And once they were in the midst of committing mass murder against millions of Jews and non-Jews on Soviet territory, “ordinary” Germans did not shrink from implementing Hitler’s Final Solution for the Jews of Europe as well.

Germany’s string of military successes came to an extraordinarily abrupt end in late October. The bad weather, terrible roads, shortage of supplies, exhaustion of German troops, and stubborn resistance of the remnants of the Red Army all combined to bring the Wehrmacht to a halt. There was no open road to Moscow. But the tide of war turned too late for European Jewry. The Soviet Union was saved but the Jews of Europe were not. The Nazis were now committed to a program of mass murder which—though conceived in the euphoria of victory—would be implemented in defeat. Henceforth Hitler would cling grimly to the vision of *Lebensraum* and the Final Solution that had been reached in the fall of 1941, bringing about the destruction first of European Jewry, and ultimately of Nazi Germany itself.

Government of Israel Calls on Jews Worldwide to Submit Pages of Testimony

At its weekly meeting on 5 September, the Israeli Cabinet held a special discussion marking 50 years since the establishment of Yad Vashem, with the participation of Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate Avner Shalev.

In advance of the uploading of Yad Vashem's Central Database of *Shoah* Victims' Names to the Internet in November, the Government of Israel called on Jews in Israel and around the world to redeem the names of *Shoah* victims by completing Pages of Testimony: "This joint national endeavor of the Jewish people—led by Yad Vashem—will provide victims with a lasting memorial in Jerusalem."

The Government also noted that Yad Vashem will soon complete its development plan, revolutionizing the institution's capacity to meet the challenges posed by the passage of time: "This will be highlighted in March 2005 with the opening of the new Holocaust History Museum, the People of Israel's expression of the *Shoah* for the 21st century."

Government ministers also expressed their appreciation for Yad Vashem's role in shaping Jewish and Israeli identity, in the struggle against antisemitism, and "in successfully carrying out the mission bestowed on it by the Jewish People."



Prime Minister Ariel Sharon (center) calls on Jews worldwide to submit Pages of Testimony

Combating Antisemitism

Antisemitism: What Should We Do Now?

At a top-level meeting with leaders of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) on 5 July at Yad Vashem, participants stressed the importance of cooperation in promoting educational tools to combat antisemitism. Topics



highlighted during the panel discussion between ADL National Director Abraham H. Foxman (left), Yad Vashem Academic Advisor Professor Yehuda Bauer (right) and Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate Avner Shalev (center), included: the recent rise of antisemitism and methods to confront it; the increase in Holocaust denial and trivialization; and the role of Holocaust education in reversing these worrying trends. Participants—researchers and educators from Yad Vashem as well as top lay leaders from the ADL, including National Chair Barbara Balsler—also gave a status report on antisemitism in Europe and the Islamic countries, and addressed new ways in which to deal with the phenomenon.

Panelists focused on practical ways that Yad Vashem and the ADL can cooperate in the fight against antisemitism. Based on Yad Vashem's experience and expertise in the history of the *Shoah* and Holocaust education worldwide, and the ADL's resources and role in the fight against antisemitism, the two institutions agreed to promote cooperation in developing pedagogical tools and curricula on the Holocaust and antisemitism.

New Visual Center to include Shoah Foundation's testimonies

On 28 June, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate Avner Shalev and President and CEO of Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation Douglas Greenberg signed an historic agreement under which the Shoah Foundation, established by filmmaker Steven Spielberg, will provide Yad Vashem with access to all 52,000 testimonies in the Shoah Foundation archive—including those of more than 8,500 Holocaust survivors and other witnesses recorded in Israel or in Hebrew outside of Israel—and all associated metadata (biographical information and referential keywords for further research). This landmark partnership will create worldwide cooperative educational activities, exhibit Shoah Foundation testimonies in Yad Vashem's new Holocaust History Museum and Visual Center opening next year, and generate other cooperative activities in the future.

"Complementary to documentary evidence and historical research, the testimonies of survivors add the personal and human aspect to the legacy of the *Shoah*," said Shalev. Greenberg agreed: "This partnership joins the Shoah Foundation's unrivalled collection of video testimonies to the incomparable work of Yad Vashem—the leading institution in the world focused on Holocaust documentation and education. In so doing, the agreement reaffirms and strengthens our shared commitment to understanding the Holocaust in fundamentally human and moral terms."



President and CEO of Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation Douglas Greenberg (left) and Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate Avner Shalev

Claims Conference Approves Further Support of Development Plan

by Arie Zuckerman

Since Yad Vashem's establishment, the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany has been a strategic partner in its research, documentation and educational activities. In the early 1990s the Claims Conference became a chief supporter of Yad Vashem's development plan, committing itself to financing one-third of the budget.

With the addition of elements to the project over time, the budget has grown. In keeping with its strategic partnership with Yad Vashem, the Claims Conference has recently approved a further major allocation toward the development project. Yad Vashem is extremely grateful for the continued support of the Claims Conference.

The author is Special Advisor to the Chairman of the Directorate

Meeting of The International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania held at Yad Vashem

by Yifat Bachrach-Ron

In early September, the International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania held a meeting at Yad Vashem to review and discuss all the draft papers prepared by its working groups before presenting its final report to Romanian President Ion Iliescu in November.

The International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania was created by President Iliescu in October 2003, backed by the American Jewish Committee, B'nai B'rith, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Israel's Foreign Ministry and Yad Vashem. The Commission is chaired by Nobel Peace Laureate and Vice Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council Professor Elie Wiesel. The vice-chairs are Israel State Archivist Professor Tuvia Friling, the Romanian Institute of Political Defense Studies and Military History's General Mihai E. Ionescu, and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's Dr. Radu Ioanid. The Commission's working group consists of leading historians and public figures from the United States, Romania, France, Germany and Israel.

As per the Commission's mandate, the final report will examine the Holocaust in Romania, including the responsibility of the Romanian leadership at the time, and analyze the relationship of Romania to its past, war crimes trials, and the place of the Holocaust in Romanian public discourse. The Commission's conclusions are expected to include recommendations on ways to foster Holocaust awareness in Romanian education; increased efforts to document names of Holocaust victims; and events to highlight Holocaust Remembrance Day in Romania on 9 October.

When the Commission was established, the Romanian President pledged to disseminate its findings to the Romanian public. This commitment includes publishing the findings in Romanian and English; informing the public of them through the media and conferences for different target groups and decision-makers; creating a website where the material will be available in Romanian and English; and disseminating knowledge about the Holocaust in Romania's educational system via teacher training programs and the creation of educational materials. The Commission will also issue an analysis of current trends of Holocaust denial in Romania and recommendations on ways to combat them.

In the course of their meetings, Commission members toured Yad Vashem, including the "No Child's Play" exhibition where an album donated by Lya Benjamin, herself a Commission member, is displayed. The album was prepared by Dr. Arduș Izor for his granddaughter Lya on her first birthday.

Reminder: International Conference on Holocaust Research, 21-24 November

From 21-24 November, the International Institute for Holocaust Research is convening an international conference entitled: "Holocaust Research in Context: The Emergence of Research Centers and Approaches," as part of the events marking Yad Vashem's 50th anniversary. Unlike previous Yad Vashem historical conferences focusing on different aspects of the Holocaust, this conference will deal with Holocaust research itself and the research centers that have emerged since the end of WWII, with special emphasis on Yad Vashem's role in its establishment and development over the past half century. Professor Gerhard Weinberg will deliver the keynote address on "Two Separate Issues? Historiography of World War II and the Holocaust."

Highlighting the conference will be a special session on "Who was Responsible for the Holocaust: Hitler or the Germans?" marking the publication of *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evaluation of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942* by Professor Christopher Browning (published by Yad Vashem in association with University of Nebraska Press, see p. 13). Professor Browning, Professor Omer Bartov, Professor Ulrich Herbert and Dr. Jürgen Matthäus will address the audience. In addition, a full day of discussion will be dedicated to the role of survivor testimony in shaping the image of the Holocaust in historical research, in trials and in literature.

The conference is being convened through the generous support of the Gertner Center for International Holocaust Conferences.

News from the Library

Library Receives Fackenheim Publications

Recently, the Yad Vashem Library was privileged to choose publications from the literary estate of the late Professor Emil Fackenheim, owing to a kind offer made by Professor Michael Morgan, the estate executor. Fackenheim *z"l*—a seminal Jewish philosopher who struggled with the implications of the Holocaust—passed away last year. He was probably best known for his formulation of the "614th Commandment:" after the Holocaust Jews should remain faithful, continue to live as Jews and thus avoid giving Hitler a posthumous victory.



Professor Emil Fackenheim *z"l*

Among Fackenheim's most important works are: *God's Presence in History: Jewish Affirmations and Philosophical Reflections*, *The Jewish Return into History: Reflections in the Age of Auschwitz and a New Jerusalem*; and *To Mend the World: Foundations of Post-Holocaust Jewish Thought*. In addition to his writings, the library acquired other works from his personal collection. Placing publications from Fackenheim's literary estate in the Yad Vashem Library is a fitting memorial to such an important Jewish thinker.

Microfilm from the Slovak National Library

As part of an exchange agreement with the Slovak National Library, the Yad Vashem Library has received microfilm of newspapers relevant to the history of the Holocaust in Slovakia. The collection comprises 23 Jewish and non-Jewish newspapers on 121 microfilm reels. The exchange is part of an ongoing relationship between the two libraries, through which Yad Vashem has provided the Slovaks with essential material about the Holocaust.

The author is Director of the Library

RECENT VISITS TO YAD VASHEM



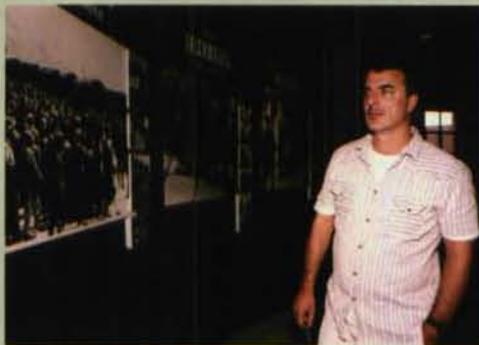
During his visit to Yad Vashem on 28 September, Ukrainian Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich (right) was given a tour of the Historical Museum (pictured with Mark Shraberman, Documentation Registrar in the Archives Division).



On 15 July, Cameron Kerry (center)—brother of Democratic US presidential candidate Senator John Kerry—and his wife Kathy Weinman (left) searched the Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names with Director of the Hall of Names Alexander Avraham (right) and found information on his great aunt and uncle who were murdered in the Holocaust. Kerry also visited the archives where he was shown original documents relating to his family's fate.



On 28 July Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili (right) toured Yad Vashem, including the Children's Memorial, accompanied by Editor of *Yad Vashem Studies* Dr. David Silberklang (left).



Actor Chris Noth visited Yad Vashem on 26 July and toured the Historical Museum (pictured), the Art Museum's "No Child's Play" exhibit and the Children's Memorial.



On 6 September, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov visited Yad Vashem and laid a wreath in the Hall of Remembrance.

Events in July – September 2004

5 July A day of lectures, discussions and tours, and a cultural evening in the Valley of the Communities, for participants in the **24th International Conference for Jewish Genealogy**. The evening included performances by singer Shuli Natan, cantor Asher Hainowitz and the Gogol Harmonica Orchestra conducted by Alex Reiss. Benny Hendel acted as Master of Ceremonies.

14 July Ceremony honoring Righteous Among the Nations Stephan and Anna Tchaikovsky, Feodosi and Melanya Ploshchadni, Leonid and Antonina Stavenko and Nadezhda Makrushits from the Ukraine and Belarus. The certificates and medals were given to members of their families, in the presence of the survivors' families.

29 July Ceremony officially presenting to Yad Vashem the ring used by the Polish underground and the ZZW (Jewish underground) in Warsaw to contact each other during WWII (see Magazine 34, Summer 2004). The ceremony was attended by Professor Moshe Arens, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate Avner Shalev, Dr. Sarah Osazitsky-Lazar, Adi Lazar and their families, Director of the Jabotinsky Institute Archives Amira Stern and the Yad Vashem Museum staff.

3 August Annual ceremony in memory of the Jews of Rhodes murdered in the Holocaust, attended by dozens of Jews from Rhodes and their families. Speeches were given by Director of the Yad Vashem Library Dr. Robert Rozett, author and poet Matilda Cohen-Serano, and Chairperson of the Rhodes-Kos Association Renee Kapuya.

5 August Annual memorial ceremony in honor of Dr. Janusz Korczak and the children he harbored, marking 62 years since their deportation to the Treblinka extermination camp. The ceremony was held in the Janusz Korczak Square, attended by members of the Korczak Association, cadets from the *Mahanot Olim* Youth Movement, and members of the Youth Movement Council. After the ceremony, there was a performance of "Facing the Wall"—describing Korczak's last three years and life in the orphanage in the Warsaw ghetto—by the German "Five Loaves and Two Fishes" ensemble, conducted by Reverend Klaus-Peter Rex. The performance took place in the Valley of the Communities.

26 August Ceremony marking the publication of *Lexicon of the Righteous Among the Nations – The Netherlands*, attended by Avner Shalev, the Dutch Ambassador in Israel H.E. Mr. Bob Hiensch, Senior Editor of the *Lexicon* Dr. Joseph Michman, and Jews from the Netherlands living in Israel. On the same day, the annual conference of the Association of Members of the *Hachsharot* and Underground Pioneer Movements in Holland, including the Westerweel Group, marked **60 years since the execution of Righteous Among the Nations Joop Westerweel**.

6-7 September On 6 September, members of the Organization of Former Residents from Lodz and many guests from Lodz (including Chairman of the Organization Avraham Zelig and Chairman of the Future Generations Uri Weisenberg) visited Yad Vashem and held a **memorial ceremony marking 60 years since the liquidation of the Lodz Ghetto**. The following day, the **annual Assembly of Jews from Lodz** took place in the Cameri Theater.

23 September Annual ceremony and assembly marking 63 years since the murder of Jews by the Nazis in the Ukraine, and the massacres in Kamenets-Podolski, Babi Yar, Bogdanovka, Drobitsky Yar and other regions. The ceremony was attended by Minister of Diaspora, Society and Jerusalem Affairs Natan Sharansky, representatives of the Jewish Agency and the Ukrainian Embassy in Israel, Avner Shalev, and hundreds of members of the Association of Ukrainian Jews headed by Chairman David Levine.

Reflecting on the Past

“ They have no graves, here they will be remembered for eternity.” So reads the plaque alongside the Path of Remembrance and Reflection, newly endowed by the Schwartz Family of Melbourne, Australia. The Path—which unites the Warsaw Ghetto Square with the Valley of the Communities—leads the visitor on a contemplative journey through the forested grounds of the campus. With the generous endowment of Andor and Margaret “Baba” Schwartz and their family, thousands of visitors will walk along this path each year, pausing to reflect on the Jewish populations lost in the Holocaust.

Andor's entire family perished during the Holocaust. Andor and Baba survived in their native Hungary and in 1949, following the Communist takeover, escaped to Israel with their infant son. They migrated to Australia in 1958 and after two years of farming, moved to Melbourne and established Andmar Constructions, which flourished into a successful property development and real estate company.

In January 2004 Andor published *Living Memory*, a powerful account of his amazing courage and survival, which echoes the burden of *Shoah* survivors and their families. Yad Vashem is deeply honored and grateful for the generous support of the Schwartz family.



Left to right: Danny, Andrew (Andor), Morry, Alan and Margaret (Baba) Schwartz

Remembering the Vanished Jewish World

Dame Vivien Duffield (right) and the Clore Israel Foundation recently announced the endowment of “I Still See Their Eyes: The Vanished Jewish World”—the introductory section of Yad Vashem's new Holocaust History Museum (see pp. 4-5). The section will tell the story of the culturally rich and multi-faceted community of European Jewry between the two world wars.

Philanthropy runs deep in Dame Vivien's family. Her father, Sir Charles Clore *z"l*, was renowned for his charitable work, and Dame Vivien has continued his legacy through the patronage of arts, museums and educational initiatives in the UK and in Israel. She is an honorary fellow of the City of Jerusalem, Deputy Chairperson of the Board of the Weizmann Institute and is also involved in the restoration and ongoing support of the Migdal David Museum—the Museum of the History of Jerusalem—one of the Clore Foundation's flagship projects.

Yad Vashem is profoundly grateful to Dame Vivien Duffield and the Clore Israel Foundation for their efforts in helping preserve the memory of Jewish life before the *Shoah*, which will no doubt captivate and inform visitors for generations to come.



W Friends WORLDW

USA

The Young Leadership Associates (YLA) of the American Society for Yad Vashem sponsored an evening of art and culture for some three hundred people at Sotheby's Auction House in June. The evening included a guided gallery walk and tour of Sotheby's current exhibition "Old Masters to Contemporary Art." Proceeds from the event went to YLA and Education Department Programs, advancing Holocaust remembrance through education. Pictured left to right: Events Coordinator, American Society for Yad Vashem **Randi Halperin**, YLA member **Morris Massel**, YLA Co-Chair **Caroline Arfa Massel**, Director of Education, American Society for Yad Vashem **Marlene Warshawski Yahalom Ph.D.**, and Senior Vice President and Director, Arcade Fine Arts, Sotheby's, **Jennifer Roth**.



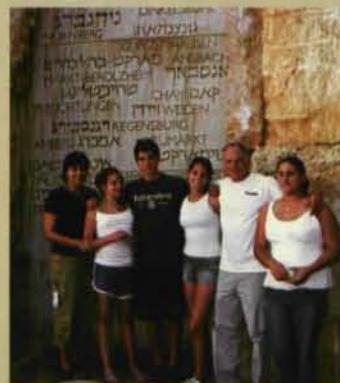
Dr. Lu Steinberg and **Dr. Michael Schulder** and their daughters visited the "No Child's Play" exhibit during a recent tour of Yad Vashem. Lu's parents, **Lillian** and **Milton Steinberg** are major Yad Vashem supporters.

Brenda Mandel (center) and **Lou Frock** (left) hosted a parlor meeting in their home in Baltimore for the Maryland chapter of the American Society for Yad Vashem. Guest speaker was Chief Fiscal Officer of the State of Israel in the Western Hemisphere **Harry Langman** (right), a child survivor of the Holocaust. Guests included **Jean** and **Ben Schreiberman**, **Regina** and **David Weinberg**, **Amy Gur**, **Joshua Mauer** and **Dr. John Mann**.



Dr. John Grossman, **Dr. Jacqueline Green** and their daughters visited the construction site of the new Learning Center endowed by Jacqueline's aunt and uncle **Stella** and **Sam Skura**.

Gary (second from right) and **Kim** (left) **Heiman** and their children visited Yad Vashem together with an extended family group who came to Israel to celebrate the *bat-mitzvah* of their daughter **Thea** (second from left). **Kim Heiman** is a member of the American Society for Yad Vashem's Executive Committee. The family is pictured here at the Munich wall in the Valley of the Communities, where the group lit candles in memory of family members who perished in the *Shoah*.



Yad Vashem mourns the loss of **Sol Silberzweig ז"ל**, who passed away in New York in August. Sol and his wife, **Gloria ז"ל**, were Benefactors of Yad Vashem. He was also a board member of the American Society for Yad Vashem.



Born in Warsaw, Sol (Szulem) Silberzweig survived the ghetto uprising, and later endured seven concentration and extermination camps and two death marches. He lost his entire family in the Holocaust except for one brother who left for America before the war. A book about Sol's remarkable survival during the *Shoah* is due to be published by Yad Vashem.

Before he passed away, Sol spoke of his excitement at attending the opening ceremony of Yad Vashem's new Holocaust History Museum on 15 March 2005—his birthday. Yad Vashem remembers Sol as a dear and generous friend and joins his three children, **Rochelle**, **Rivkah** and **Moe**, eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren in mourning his passing.

AUSTRALIA



Alan Schwartz (pictured at the Cattle Car - Memorial to the Deportees) received an overview of Yad Vashem's development plan and activities and toured the route of the Path of Remembrance and Reflection, endowed by his parents **Baba** and **Andor Schwartz** (see p. 17).

UNITED KINGDOM



On a recent visit to London, Director of the English Desk, International Relations Division Solly Kaplinski (right) presented Executive Trustee of the Yad Vashem UK Foundation Jeffrey Pinnick (left) with the new Holocaust History Museum Preview Portfolio, published in anticipation of the opening of the new Museum next March.

CANADA

David Asper (second from right)—son of Izzy ז"ל and Babs Asper—visited Yad Vashem with his family, pictured here by the plaque recognizing the Asper International Holocaust Studies Program. The program was endowed by the Asper Foundation, of which David Asper is a trustee.



VENEZUELA

During their visit to Yad Vashem, Simon and Mariana Sultan (left) and their son Gabriel (third from left), together with Mariana's parents Arie and Sara Birnbaum (second and third from right), were accompanied by Director of the International Relations Division Shaya Ben Yehuda (center) and Director of the Division's Iberoamerican Desk Perla Hazan (right)—pictured here at the exit from the new Holocaust History Museum.



LIECHTENSTEIN



In June Prince Hans-Adam II of Liechtenstein held a reception for the Liechtenstein Society for Yad Vashem at his castle in Vaduz.

Left to right: President of the Yad Vashem Society in Liechtenstein Markus

Buechel; producer of the film *Babij Jar* (shown in Liechtenstein) Artur Brauner; Mrs. Gvir; Mrs. Brauner; Prince Hans-Adam II; Ambassador Raphael Gvir (ret.) and Director of the International Relations Division's German-speaking Desk Arik Rav-On.

Yad Vashem supporter Miryam Birnbaum de Macias (center) dedicated a plaque in honor of her grandparents. The Birnbaum family was in Israel for the wedding of Hani Segal Birnbaum (second from left) to Sasha Vitali (right).



Yad Vashem appreciates the generosity of its friends in supporting its mission of *Shoah* commemoration, documentation, education and research. Together we can continue our journey, ensuring Jewish continuity and conveying universal aspirations for understanding, tolerance, and mutual respect between people everywhere. Yad Vashem would be honored to welcome you into its circle of friends and supporters.

To make tax deductible donations:

USA: American Society for Yad Vashem
500 Fifth Avenue, 42nd Floor
New York, NY 10110

Canada: Canadian Society for Yad Vashem
970 Lawrence Ave. West Suite 211
Toronto, ONT M6A 3B6

UK: Yad Vashem UK Foundation
6 Bloomsbury Square
London WC1A 2LP

For information on societies in other countries, or to donate online, please visit: <http://www.yadvashem.org> and click on "Friends of Yad Vashem."

Donations may also be sent to: International Relations Division, Yad Vashem, PO Box 3477, Jerusalem 91034, Israel.

MEXICO

Janette and Oscar Gorodzinsky visited Yad Vashem in August, pictured here at the entrance to the Valley of the Communities. Oscar's parents David and Bashe Malka Gorodzinsky are major supporters of the Valley as well as other Yad Vashem activities.



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